

DATES OF PUBLICATION OF SARGENT'S
SILVA OF NORTH AMERICA *

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FEW WHO HAVE HAD OCCASION to open its pages would disagree that the *Silva of North America*, by Charles Sargent, ranks high among the most sumptuous botanical works ever published. Its lavish format matches the generous bibliographic, descriptive, and anecdotal information it contains. Its artistic merits extend to nearly all aspects of its production including the superb quality of the line drawings by C. E. Faxon, the skill and craftsmanship of their engraving and printing, and the clarity of the type face.

Houghton, Mifflin and Company originally offered the volumes at \$25 each, or \$300 for the twelve volumes planned. During the eight years spanned in preparing the first twelve volumes, much additional information came to light on new species in the plant families already covered. To accommodate these new species, Sargent added a two-volume supplement, volumes 13 and 14. These also sold for \$25 per volume, bringing the price for the full fourteen-volume work to \$350 (Sargent, 1902–1913). The high cost (by late nineteenth century standards) required that the *Silva* depend chiefly on pre-publication subscriptions as the main manner of sale, thereby avoiding expensive inventories of unsold books. As a result the work passed out of print rather soon. It was reprinted (by a photo-offset method) in 1947 by Peter Smith of Magnolia, Massachusetts. The first reprinting was sold by the early 1960's. Mr. Smith, who still owns the copyright to the *Silva*, has told me he plans to issue another printing of the facsimile edition for release late in 1977.

Sargent's *Silva* is an important historical reference and one likely to be overlooked owing to its somewhat limited distribution. Its historical importance is based on the fact that Sargent was one of the first and most influential champions of nomenclatural priority, and the *Silva* is the first major treatise covering a large and diverse number of North American plants in which the rule of priority was strictly applied.

The *Silva* does not contain any new plant names. It includes only those species first described and published elsewhere; it does, however, resurrect many names from obscurity. Since the date when a certain name, though not new, has been recalled from earlier literature and used in place of another may be of some interest or importance, the publication date of the work where such a name reappeared could be critical. When I recently had occasion to consult the *Silva*, the edition available to me at the time was the 1947 Peter Smith facsimile reprint, in which I discovered that all

* Sargent, Charles Sprague. The *Silva of North America*; a description of the trees which grow naturally in North America exclusive of Mexico. Illustrated with figures and analyses drawn from nature by C. E. Faxon. 14 vols. Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston. 4°. 740 plates. 1890–1902.

seven volumes (the fourteen volumes of the original bound in seven) bore the same title page which I assumed had been that of the original Volume 1. The entire work thus gave the appearance of having been published in 1890 and contradicted the sequence of issuance according to the account of Sutton (1970). In turning to the original edition for clarification on publication dates, I encountered another discrepancy: the title page of the original Volume 1 carries the date 1891, a year later than the date given in the reprint, but in this volume the copyright is dated 1890, which probably represents the source of the “1890” used on the title page of the reprint. Which is the correct date? In what year did the volume actually appear? In searching for these answers, I eventually learned that in volumes 1, 3, and 11, the title page or copyright dates disagree with the actual dates of publication. I have arrived at the determination of correct publication dates, as outlined in TABLE 1, by searching published reviews, library catalogues, and notes by Sargent as well as those of Sutton (1970), his biographer. The details of these sources appear among the notes pertaining to each volume presented below. For most of the volumes, corroboration of publication dates comes largely from Tucker (1914), *Catalogue of the Library of the Arnold Arboretum*. Here the catalogue entry (p. 623) lists exact dates for every volume except Volume 1, which is given merely as 1891. The printing of an exact date for thirteen of the fourteen volumes of the *Silva* aroused my curiosity as this practice seems not to occur elsewhere in the *Catalogue*, or, if it does, to do so inconsistently. I suspect that the exact dates indicate the dates when the volumes arrived at the library and were accessioned. One would expect accuracy from this entry inasmuch

TABLE 1. Dates of publication of the *Silva* of North America
by Charles Sprague Sargent.

VOLUME NUMBER	TITLE PAGE DATE	COPY- RIGHT DATE	PLATE NUMBERS	ADOPTED PUBLICATION DATE	SOURCE
1	1891	1890	1– 50	October 1, 1890	Sargent, Preface to Vol. 13
2	1891	1891	51– 97	May 23, 1891	Tucker
3	1892	1891	98–147	January 21, 1892	Tucker
4	1892	1892	148–197	July 2, 1892	Tucker
5	1893	1893	198–251	December 30, 1893	Tucker
6	1894	1894	252–300	May 18, 1894	Tucker
7	1895	1895	301–355	February 1, 1895	Tucker
8	1895	1895	356–438	September 20, 1895	Tucker
9	1896	1896	439–496	March 16, 1896	Tucker
10	1896	1896	497–537	November 28, 1896	Garden & Forest (Dec. 9) 1896
11	1897	1897	538–592	April 27, 1898	Tucker
12	1898	1898	593–620	January 10, 1898	Tucker
13	1902	1902	621–704	December 15, 1902	Tucker
14	1902	1902	705–740	December 15, 1902	Tucker

as the *Catalogue* comes from the same institution as the *Silva*. But, as I point out later, in addition to the 1891 date given for Volume 1, at least one other of the dates given by Tucker (1914) lacks accuracy. I hope that my clarifications will aid those who, as I, have been vexed by the problem of publication dates in this work.

NOTES ON THE SEPARATE VOLUMES

VOLUME 1. Magnoliaceae to Ilicineae [Aquifoliaceae]. Pp. i–ix, 1–119, *plates 1–50*.

Publication date: October 1, 1890.

In the preface to Volume 13 (the first of a two-volume supplement), Sargent (1902) gives the publication date of Volume 1 as October, 1890. Sutton (1970, p. 150) states that, "volume one of Sargent's *Silva* appeared in 1891." She probably derived this date from the title page of Volume 1 as noted above. But a page later (p. 151), she quotes from a review of the *Silva* which appeared in the January 3, 1891, issue of *Gardener's Chronicle* (anon., 1891a). It seems unlikely that a review would appear in a British periodical on the third day of the new year unless the reviewer had had the work in hand a few weeks earlier. Additional reference supporting an 1890 publication date comes from an article in *Garden and Forest* (Britton, 1890), of December 3, 1890, announcing the appearance of Volume 1.

Since Sargent himself established the date in October of that year, I propose October 1, 1890, as the day of publication.

VOLUME 2. Cyrillaceae to Sapindaceae. 117 pp., *plates 51–97*.

Publication date: May 23, 1891 (Tucker, 1914).

An unsigned review of Volume 2 of the *Silva* appeared in the June 10, 1891, issue of *Garden and Forest* (anon., 1891b). There the phrase, "The second volume of this work which has just been issued . . ." corroborates Tucker's accession date of May 23, 1891.

VOLUME 3. Anacardiaceae to Leguminosae. 141 pp., *plates 98–147*.

Publication date: January 21, 1892 (Tucker, 1914).

The words, "The third volume . . . which has recently appeared . . .," taken from a review in *Garden and Forest* dated February 17, 1892 (anon., 1892), suggest that the date provided by Tucker comes very close to the actual date of publication, and I have adopted it here.

VOLUME 4. Rosaceae to Saxifragaceae. 141 pp., *plates 148–197*.

Publication date: July 2, 1892 (Tucker, 1914).

The celebrated Liberty Hyde Bailey published a review (1892) of Volume 4 in the July 20, 1892, issue of *Garden and Forest*. The interval between the date of this review and the earlier date of Tucker as noted above argues in favor of adopting her date for the date of publication.

VOLUME 5. Hamamelidaceae to Sapotaceae. 189 pp., *plates 198–251*.

Publication date: December 30, 1893 (Tucker, 1914).

The issue of *Gardener's Chronicle* dated December 2, 1893, carries a brief notice of the appearance of Volume 5 of the *Silva* (anon., 1893a). An expanded review of this volume came out in the same periodical a week later (anon., 1893b). In neither place do we find a direct reference to a publication date. Therefore, I adopt the one given by Tucker.

VOLUME 6. Ebenaceae to Polygonaceae. 124 pp., *plates 252–300*.

Publication date: May 18, 1894 (Tucker, 1914).

A review of Volume 6 was printed in the *Gardener's Chronicle* (anon., 1894) nearly four months after the date noted by Tucker.

VOLUME 7. Lauraceae to Juglandaceae. 173 pp., *plates 301–355*.

Publication date: February 1, 1895 (Tucker, 1914).

Neither of two reviews (anon., 1895a, 1895b) reports a date of publication which would contradict that of Tucker.

VOLUME 8. Cupuliferae [Fagaceae], *Quercus*. 190 pp., *plates 356–438*.

Publication date: September 20, 1895 (Tucker, 1914).

Reviews of Volume 8 (Buchenau, 1895; anon., 1896a) are not in conflict with the date of publication assigned by Tucker.

VOLUME 9. Cupuliferae [Fagaceae] to Salicaceae. 190 pp., *plates 439–496*.

Publication date: March 16, 1896 (Tucker, 1914).

A copy of the original edition held by the combined libraries of the Arnold Arboretum and the Gray Herbarium, Harvard University, Cambridge, bears on the title page an unsigned penciled note giving the Volume 9 publication date as March 16, 1896. This is the same date Tucker has used.

Buchenau (1896) wrote a review (dated October 16, 1896) of Volume 9 for a German periodical.

VOLUME 10. Liliaceae to Coniferae [Pinaceae *sensu lato*]. 159 pp., *plates 497–537*.

Publication date: November 28, 1896 (anon., 1896b).

In a review of Volume 10 in the December 9, 1896, issue of *Garden and Forest*, I find the only precise publication date in periodical literature for any installment of the *Silva*. It happens also that among the "exact day" dates of Tucker (1914), only this one is in error. Tucker sets the date of publication as November 30. This two-day discrepancy between the date shown in *Garden and Forest* and that given by Tucker represents the evidence upon which I conclude that the dates Tucker records reflect the times of accession of these volumes to the Arnold Arboretum library.

A review of Volume 10 appeared also in *Gardener's Chronicle* of January 2, 1897 (anon., 1897a). A second and longer article (anon., 1897b) in the

same periodical further deals with Volume 10 and adds a general essay on American trees, especially as revealed in the *Silva* up to that time.

VOLUME 11. Coniferae [Pinaceae], *Pinus*. 163 pp., plates 538–592.

Publication date: April 27, 1898 (Tucker, 1914).

In this year *Garden and Forest* ceased publication. The magazine was not an official organ of the Arnold Arboretum, but had served as a vehicle for Sargent to express his views (Sutton, 1970). Many of the unsigned articles such as the reviews cited here were actually written by Sargent (Sutton, pers. comm.).

VOLUME 12. Coniferae [Pinaceae except *Pinus*]. 144 pp., plates 593–620.

Publication date: January 10, 1899 (Tucker, 1914).

During the years Sargent worked on the *Silva*, many new species of woody plants from North America and elsewhere came to light. These Sargent (1902–1913) collected in a two-volume folio work entitled *Trees and Shrubs*. The original covers of these volumes are bound into the copies held by the library of the Arnold Arboretum (Jamaica Plain). Printed on these covers is an advertisement for the *Silva*, accompanied by notes on the scope of the work. The advertisement announces the date of appearance of Volume 12 as January, 1899, thus substantiating the date recorded by Tucker.

VOLUME 13. Rhamnaceae to Rosaceae. 184 pp., plates 621–704.

Publication date: December 15, 1902 (Tucker, 1914).

This is the first of the two-volume supplement to the originally planned twelve-volume work. Both volumes appeared on the same day (see below). Sargent dated the preface in the first "June 1902." The interval from June to December when Tucker recorded the December 15 date seems a reasonable time to allow for printing.

VOLUME 14. Caricaceae to Coniferae [Pinaceae]. 52 pp., plates 705–740.

Publication date: December 15, 1902 (Tucker, 1914).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank the Directors of the Arnold Arboretum and the Morton Arboretum for the use of their respective library facilities while searching these matters, and the Council of Academic Deans, Northern Illinois University, for a summer research stipend.

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